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Among lycopods *L. clavatum*, *L. complanatum* var. *flabelliforme*, *L. inundatum*, *L. lucidulum*, and *L. obscurum* with its var. *dendroideum* occurred at both localities. *L. clavatum* var. *megastachyon* was found at Essex and on Mt. Mansfield, *L. tristachyum* at Burlington and Fairfield, and *L. Selago* at 3950 feet on Mt. Mansfield. The only selaginella of the region is *S. rupestris*, which was collected at Cobbehill, Milton, and at Prospect Hill, St. Albans, where it formed large mats on exposed ledges at 800 feet.

PARIS, FRANCE.

Fern nomenclature

CHAS. T. DRUERY, V. M. H., F. L. S.

From the point of view of the English Fern students, the fern nomenclature adopted in the AMERICAN FERN JOURNAL affords ample evidence of the terrible haste which the scientific botanists have made in the course of their research regarding the original names given by the older botanists with the result of resurrections thereof (i. e. of the names, not the botanists), and the increased puzzlement of the fernists of the present day due to the changes involved. In many cases this involves a sort of translation from one language into another which between otherwise English-speaking nations is an absurdity. I, for instance, am familiar with certain common ferns, which are popularly called buckler ferns and scientifically here *Lastrea*, or better still, *Nephrodium*, this latter name indicating the kidney-shaped form of the indusium, which the word buckler, as distinct from shield, does also to an accepted extent. In the States, however, instead of these I find frequent mention of *Dryopteris* as the accepted synonym, which merely means oak fern, an obvious absurdity, as

the genus is practically ubiquitous, and I only recognize familiar friends when I see them figured in association. Looking further into the matter (p. 18) I find *Dryopteris* = *Polystichum* in parenthesis, an altogether different genus, which we call shield ferns, from the circular form of the indusium, but which is further distinctly characterized by a peculiar form of the pinnule or secondary (or tertiary) division. See for instance the illustrations of plates 9 and 10 and compare with plates 12 and 13, which clearly show the difference which is enhanced by the very different texture of the fronds and their lucent or non-lucent surface. No grower of the two genera could class them as one, yet as a heading to p. 7, *Dryopteris*=*Aspidium* (shield fern) emphasizing the reference already made (p. 18). On p. 19 we have repeated the old absurdity of classing *Athyrium filix-foemina* with the asplenias, to my mind one of the most absurd allocations imaginable, since the asplenium fructification is linear, they are evergreen, of tough texture, grow mostly on rocks and in short differ in every respect from the soft-fronded, deciduous, moisture-loving *Athyrium*, with its indefinite horse-shoe sori and ragged indusium, etc., etc. In my humble opinion a vast proportion of this exhuming botanical work with a view to reformation of the existing nomenclature is simply a waste of time and energy and only contributes to increase the confusion they aim at clearing up. There should be a statute of limitations imposed and more consideration given to the ideas of the cultivation of living plants than to the literally dry-as-dust data afforded by herbaria only. Why accept the ancient authorities as determining ones when the knowledge and material at their disposal was necessarily scanty and incomplete? In our old British fern literature, for instance, great as is the debt we owe to the pioneers of that day, we find

that hardly a single name is retained nowadays, subsequent experience having displayed their inaccuracy and led to correction.

What is the Habitat of *Ophioglossum vulgatum*

R. C. BENEDICT

There seems to be some difference in opinion as to the usual habitat of *Ophioglossum vulgatum*. Note the two following references to it which have appeared in the FERN JOURNAL in the last few numbers.

"*Ophioglossum vulgatum* I have found several times, usually in dryish soil. It seems to like the shade of *Pteris*, and is probably not rare, but it is so slender that it is frequently overlooked."¹

"From the description given above, it will be noted that the situation was not dissimilar to that required by *Ophioglossum*—indeed the latter occurred there—and it is not unlikely that careful search in *Ophioglossum* territory may reveal more localities for *Schizaea*."²

The latter statement brought a query from a member of the Society who is familiar with the flora of southern New Jersey, and who stated that the usual habitat for *Ophioglossum* in southern New Jersey was in the pine barrens, and that the locality as described by me above was most unusual. As it happened that I was there for *Schizaea*, and the *Ophioglossum* was not fertile, I did not collect any, particularly as the situation was not in any important respect different from the places in which I had already found *Ophioglossum*. But Mr. Knowlton's description of the *Ophioglossum* habitat shows it to be in Maine decidedly unlike those I am familiar with. Can we not have a symposium here in the Journal on the habitat of *Ophioglossum*? I would ask that all who have found the adder's tongue send in a statement of

¹C. H. Knowlton, Ferns and their Allies in Southern Franklin County, Maine. Am. Fern Jour. 4:5. 1914.

²American Fern Journal 3:13. 1913.